

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

**LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:**

1-9. (Canceled).

10. (Previously Presented) A device for determining an instant a vehicle makes contact with an impact object, comprising:

a determining arrangement for determining the instant of contact by approximating a signal derived from an acceleration signal using a quadratic function.

11. (Previously Presented) The device as recited in claim 10, further comprising:  
an arrangement for one of filtering the acceleration signal and integrating the acceleration signal once or twice.

12. (Previously Presented) The device as recited in claim 10, wherein the determining arrangement takes into account an impact velocity when determining the instant of contact.

13. (Previously Presented) The device as recited in claim 12, wherein the determining arrangement determines the impact velocity as a function of a vehicle velocity.

14. (Previously Presented) The device as recited in claim 13, wherein the determining arrangement determines the impact velocity as a function of a surrounding-field signal.

15. (Previously Presented) The device as recited in claim 10, further comprising:  
an approximating arrangement for approximating the signal using at least two threshold values.

16. (Canceled).

17. (Previously Presented) The device as recited in claim 10, wherein the determining arrangement determines the instant of contact from a vertex of the quadratic function.

18. (Previously Presented) The device as recited in claim 17, wherein the determining arrangement takes into account an impact velocity linearly in the determination of the instant of contact.

19. (Previously Presented) The device as recited in claim 10, further comprising:  
an approximating arrangement for approximating the signal using four threshold values.

20. (Previously Presented) The device as recited in claim 13, further comprising:  
an approximating arrangement for approximating the signal using four threshold values.

21. (Previously Presented) The device as recited in claim 13, further comprising:  
an approximating arrangement for approximating the signal using two threshold values.

22. (Previously Presented) The device as recited in claim 10, wherein the determining arrangement determines the instant of contact from a vertex of the quadratic function, and wherein the determining arrangement takes into account an impact velocity linearly in the determination of the instant of contact.

23. (Previously Presented) The device as recited in claim 22, further comprising:  
an approximating arrangement for approximating the signal using two threshold values.

24. (Previously Presented) The device as recited in claim 13, further comprising:  
an approximating arrangement for approximating the signal using four threshold values.